

The Critic

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Ferguson and his Irish Fellow-poets.

By the death of Sir Samuel Ferguson a wide gap has been made in the thin line of Irish patriots belonging to the generation near its close. He was one of those who in youth felt exquisitely the wrongs that were done to his native island, and he did what in him lay to save her from native and foreign foes. Without being a conspicuous member of the Young Ireland party which criticised the great Dan O'Connell when he showed himself timid and time-serving, and had the temerity to enter into unequal combat with the Liberator, in feeling he was always on the national side. But he drew more to quiet workmen like Eugene O'Curry and others, who realized the necessity for hard work in many lines before it was possible to understand Ireland. Never in touch with the people, he wrought his enthusiasm into works of no small literary art, instead of becoming an active politician or continuously a member of the press militant. In 1846 he was an invalid on his way to Rome, and, though a Protestant, was accredited to Cardinals and other high ecclesiastics by his Catholic friends. 'I was excessively pleased with him,' a London Irishman wrote home, 'and with all my previous opinion of him, was scarcely prepared to find him so very national. He is hopeful beyond measure for the country, and says there is a strong manly intellect growing up in Ireland which will trample the emasculated mind of England under foot.'

Samuel Ferguson was an Ulsterman, and after writing for *The Nation* for some time did the cause of the repeal of that Union which had been so infamously procured at the beginning of the century the great service of forming a Protestant Repeal Association. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor of that paper, now an Australian statesman, describes him in a recent volume: 'A deep perpendicular brow and transparent eyes gave intellectual nobility to an expression which would otherwise be somewhat hard. Grave and slow of utterance, he looked like a solid lawyer, and was, in fact, a poet of imagination so vivid that he has wielded, as no one since Ossian has done, the profuse many-colored rhetoric of the Celt, and in another vein revelled in the wild humor of Irish burlesque.' Sir Charles cannot prove that Ferguson ever wrote any comic verse; nor does he clearly intimate which Ossian he compares him to—the Scotch Ossian as interpreted and pieced out by the clever Macpherson in the last century, or the old Oisín whom the Irish manuscripts revealed nearly a hundred years later in the more ancient form of separate ballads: two descendants of the same stock as far as possible asunder in spirit. There is little in Ferguson's poetry of that magnificent vagueness, that impressionism and absence of outline which form the strange delight of the Scottish Ossian; it is more like the Irish ballads of Oisín in a modern dress, not so massive and folk-right, yet by no means wanting in manliness. His lightest vein may be found in 'The Widow's Cloak,' a delicate eulogy of Queen Victoria which rambles a little toward the end and has a touch of Jingo politics:

To her sister in the cottage, to the Highland hut comes she;
She takes the old wife by the hand, she shares her cup of tea;
She loves the lowly people; years of life have taught her well
In God's great household they the bulk
Of inmates dwell.

He was born in Belfast in 1810, studied at Trinity, was admitted to the bar in 1838, was appointed Deputy Keeper of the Records of Ireland in 1867, and was knighted by the late Duke of Marlborough in 1879. His 'Lays of the Western Gael' appeared in 1865, his 'Congal' in 1867, and a volume of verse in 1880. No one has equalled Ferguson in translating Irish poetry of the Middle Ages, and perhaps in the long run the work he did in this line will outlive his original poetry. Few poems rouse the thrill of greatness more than 'Deirdre's Lament for the Sons of Usnach' by an unknown bard. Here are four stanzas.

The lions of the hill are gone,
And I am left alone, alone;
Dig the grave both wide and deep,
For I am sick and fain would sleep.

The falcons of the wood are flown,
And I am left alone, alone;
Dig the grave both deep and wide
And let us slumber side by side.

Sweet companions were ye ever;
Harsh to me, your sister, never;
Woods and wilds and misty valleys
Were with you as good's a palace.

The dragons of the rock are sleeping—
Sleep that wakes not from our weeping;
Dig the grave and make it ready,
Lay me on my true love's body.

Ferguson was not only the best prepared of all these writers, but he seems to have added industry to natural aptitude: he was thorough in whatever he did, whether it was a translation from Irish poetry or a series of Hibernian Nights in prose. Irishmen set great store by his work, and many account him the greatest national poet Ireland has produced in this century, not excluding Tom Moore, whom the earnest patriot regards as a weakling stiff with English veneer. An American who has made a study of Irish poetry, Mr. Alfred M. Williams, does not fall below the most favorable Irish estimate. In a recent review of Ferguson in the *Providence Journal* he says:

He did not study it [the national poetry written in Gaelic] in the spirit of the archæologist and antiquarian, although with equal diligence and accuracy, but with a sympathetic appreciation of its pervading elements of poetry, and the genius of the Celtic race. He studied not to translate, but to reproduce, the spirit of the Ossianic verse. Not only does the spirit of Celtic Ireland dwell completely and perfectly in his poetry, but I know of no other instance in which the work has been so thoroughly and successfully done. It has not attracted the attention or received the appreciation it deserves, for the reason that there has been an almost complete neglect of Celtic literature, and of Irish in particular, in English study. Ferguson had in a great measure to create the knowledge and the taste for the appreciation of his national poetry even among his own countrymen, and it cannot be said even now that its recognition is universal or even widespread among them.

Undoubtedly Ferguson surpassed Aubrey de Vere, the Catholic poet, who has explored the legends of the Saints as faithfully as he has the records of champions hardly if at all affected by Christianity. Not only was Ferguson the more accomplished archæologist, but he was able to avoid better than De Vere the dangerous fascinations of Tennyson, whose polished work on the British legends is weak in comparison with Ferguson's epic. Thomas Osborne Davis, who died in 1845, before the enemies of Ireland within and without destroyed the journal he did most of any to establish, was very different from these two poets. He, too, undertook to write ballads for the people, at the very end of his life; and, strange to say, his fame was, and is still, wider than theirs, perhaps because his death just at that moment of impending disasters gave a shock to all Ireland, where every

patriot valued, and perhaps many overrated, his contributions to the poetry of *The Nation*. Davis was not by nature so gifted a poet as Ferguson or De Vere, but he cast his efforts in short ballads for the press, and treated of, or alluded to, topics of the time. The man who could write 'Oh, for a Steed!' at a time when the famine was approaching, when England was insulting the Irish in all ways and begging her, whilst deaf to a demand for self-government, was great as a political force if not an occupant of the highest seat among the bards. Here is one verse to show to what lengths of exasperation the insensate policy toward Ireland could drive a good man and a lover of peace:

Oh! for a steed, a rushing steed, on the plains of Hindustan,
And a hundred thousand cavaliers to charge like a single man,
Till our shirts were red
And the English fled
Like a cowardly caravan.

'The Sack of Baltimore' is chanted yet in the streets by the miserable singers, and is found on the penny broadsides. 'The Girl I Left behind Me' and 'Clare's Dragoons' are still favorites, since without the finest literary touch they have a sturdy vigor that strikes the popular ear, and a breath of patriotism that kindles the dullest love for country and race.

Another writer for *The Nation* in Davis's day was Thomas Darcy McGee, the proscribed of 1848, who rose to a high position in Canada and was murdered by a miscreant because he opposed the Fenian invasion from the United States. McGee was considered Davis's equal, but he never obtained such popularity. The latter began to write verse only a few years before his death, and may be said to have prepared his audience by his prose works ('Essays,' etc.) which appealed to all that was gallant and disinterested in the Irish public. In his day the ballads of M. J. Barry were greatly liked—a youth who deserted the cause after 1848, became a police magistrate in Dublin, and now lives in France. Sir C. G. Duffy recalls a quick answer that he made to counsel in the trial of an Irish American. A constable swore that the prisoner had a Republican hat. 'I presume,' said the judge, 'a Republican hat is a hat without a crown.'

Other favorites were John Keegan, a peasant, and John Francis Waller, both of whom were more in touch with the people than their comrades; whilst James Clarence Mangan took higher rank as a poet, did some useful work in the way of translation from the German masters, and issued volumes of original work which are still in demand. Denis Florence McCarthy is known to the widest public for his translations from Calderon; but as a poet he surpassed Mangan, without falling into the desperate courses that made that unhappy being a misery to himself and his friends. The popular novelists Samuel Lover and Charles Lever also wrote verse during *The Nation* period, but neither was a very zealous nationalist; both wrote for English people and 'renegade' Irish, and only one can be considered in sympathy with the aspirations of Thomas Davis and his friends. Their continued treatment of Irish characters as food for the sense of the ridiculous is still bitterly resented by patriots. Several young women came to the front in unexpected ways. Such was not 'Maria' of *The Nation*, who was John Fraser, a cabinetmaker; nor 'Carolina Wilhelmina,' who was a barrister; but 'Mary' was Miss Mary Patrick Downing, of Cork, a writer of graceful lyrics but unable to compose ballads of the stirring sort then much desired. 'Eva' was Miss Mary Kelly, now Mrs. Kevin O'Dogherty, of Queensland, and 'Thomasine' was Miss Olivia Knight, now Mrs. Hope Connolly. John Dillon married a young girl whom the immense and sudden popularity of *The Nation* roused to some attempts to aid the cause as a correspondent. The most noted of the woman's band was Miss Jane Francesca Elgee, daughter of a Church-of-England Archdeacon, who signed her poems 'Speranza,' and whose indignation was hot in those days

against the cynical indifference of the English concerning the misgovernment and famine in Ireland, and the quarrels among the patriots themselves that frustrated every plan to better things:

'A million a decade!' What does it mean?
A nation dying of inner decay,
A churchyard silence where life has been,
The base of the pyramid crumbling away:
A drift of men gone over the sea,
A drift of the dead where men should be.

* * * * *

Ye stand at the Judgment-bar to-day—
The angels are counting the death-roll too,
Have ye trod in the pure and perfect way
And ruled for God as the crowned should do?
Count our dead!—before angels and men
Ye're judged and doomed by the Statist's pen.

The writer of so much eloquent and fiery verse married a Dryasdust, who did good work for Irish archæology, in his painstaking way, was knighted as Sir William Wilde, and begot that curious phenomenon, Oscar Wilde, odd offspring of a strangely mated pair.

These are the most noted contemporaries of the late Sir Samuel Ferguson, without touching on the writers whose midwork lies before *The Nation* period or on those who have come to fame since. At that period the literary centre shifted from Cork to Dublin; or it would perhaps be truer to say, that literature largely deserted the South of Ireland in obedience to the enormous attractive force of London, but held its own in Dublin. Whatever be the final estimate of Ferguson, it is certain that his work is genuine throughout, unpretentious, and as national in a literary sense as that of any poet who has written in English. To foreigners he is the most important exemplar of modern Irish literature.

Reviews

Poetry and Poets.*

THE ordinary use made of Nature by the poets is to hold her, in her various forms, as a manifestation of powers behind herself,—powers residing in a conscious Being, whose only visibility lies in the form and face of Nature and of Man. Without greatly reasoning the thing out, the poet is content to let the movement and appearance of what he sees stand as representing the creative Being, and he troubles himself but little about the many opinions which the speculative philosopher raises. If he wishes to indicate power greater than Man possesses, it resides in the winds and the sea, to which he appeals; or beauty ever varying, never wearying, it is in the flowers and the sunshine; or permanence exceeding that of human institutions, it is in the recurring seasons, in the sun and the stars. It is enough for him if he can touch a chord in Man's soul which shall vibrate newly and with new force. Poetry lives only as it clings to this realism for its foothold.

The Hon. Roden Noel, in his brilliant 'Essays on Poetry and the Poets,' recalls, though with a difference, the Transcendentalists of forty years ago, in his attempt to define more exactly the relation of Nature to Man. In his definition, he is as hard to follow as were some of the Transcendentalists in theirs. We understand him perfectly when he says: 'The moods of Nature do mysteriously respond to the moods of man. To the sensitive spirit the sea, the mountains, and the stars are very types and symbols of permanence, order, eternity.' This is the ordinary poetic attitude towards Nature, and is intelligible. When he adds that 'the harmony of inviolable laws appears in her co-operant to an end,' that also, in the light of recent scientific observation, is quite intelligible, either in the view that Nature is carrying out the laws of a Being behind herself, or of a Being of which she is herself a part. Under this

* *Essays on Poetry and Poets.* By the Hon. Roden Noel. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.

latter view, we may even understand the writer when he interprets her as 'one who toils not nor dreams, errs not nor supposes, raves not nor repents, but calmly fulfils herself forever.' But we get on ground less steady when we follow him further. 'Nature and Man,' he says, 'are elder sister and younger brother; she wakes intelligence and will in him; he knows himself in knowing her.' 'He who loses his own personality in Nature, who lays down before her, the universal mother and tomb of humanity, his own private wrongs and griefs and fevered aspirations, hereby redresses the balance so unduly weighted with the self-will and momentary longings of the restless man.' 'This inevitableness of a universal order [in Nature] implicitly involves the idea of rightness, that of some unfulfilled obligation tinged with morality, or what is akin to it.' Here we seem to be involved in a species of nature-worship certainly not in Wordsworth's mind when he wrote 'Tintern Abbey' and the 'Ode on Immortality.' Again we feel at home when the writer tells us that 'by means of these analogues in Nature, the human heart and mind may be more profoundly understood; that 'human emotions win a double dearthness, or an added sorrow, from their fellowship and association with outward scenes.' We become a little hazy, however, when we read that 'while nature can be fathomed only through her analogies with the desires, fears, and aspirations of the human soul, these again can scarcely become defined and articulate save through the mystic and multiform appearances of nature; and we are quite lost in the mist when we are told that we 'have here a new poetic product of priceless value; neither the external scene alone, nor man alone, but rather some spiritual child of their espousals.'

Mr. Noel is himself a poet, and not a bad one; but he steps so often from the field of fact to the delightful borderland of fancy that the reader, though with the best will to do so, cannot clearly locate him. Wordsworth, who possessed the sanest of understandings, seldom lost his foothold on solid earth, though he went as close to the 'Transcendental teaching of his day as a man of so practical a mind could go. But how wide a latitude Mr. Noel leaves himself can be seen in the following: 'I do not mean to say,' he observes, 'that the animism of savages is a correct creed, for they simply deify phenomena without analysis, or suspicion that these are largely subjective; nor even do I say that the Pagan poets were correct in their mythological beliefs; or the mediævals in their fairy lore; yet I think they were not far from the truth when they formulated their conviction that our spiritual kinship with Nature testifies to some spiritual beings like ourselves behind the phenomena of Nature—the elements, and so-called inanimate objects, being only their expression, body, or vesture. Nor do I deem such a belief at all incompatible with a full recognition of that ever-widening kingdom of physical law, to which modern Science introduces us: only let Science "stick to her own last!" Quite certainly the ancients were never guilty of deliberately, in cold blood, inventing a quasi-poetic, or metaphorical diction, which the vulgar were so foolish as to take for literal fact, as our pseudo-scientific insincerity of unbelief and incapacity for comprehending other modes of thought and feeling, now complacently assume. On the contrary, modern Nature-poetry is reverting, though in its own fashion, and in accordance with other altered convictions of our age, to this primal conception of the ancients.'

It will be seen in the extract we have given how elegant a stylist Mr. Noel is. The last sentence quoted is a good illustration of the ingenuity with which he constructs his periods. It is the ingenuity of the poet, which we find also in Swinburne and Symonds; and, since we all find our rest at last in what is most opposite to ourselves, it does not surprise us that Mr. Noel should discover a great admiration for the Byron of fifty years ago and the Walt Whitman of to-day—neither of them writers of too great nicety or bal-

ance of sentence. How catholic an admirer of Byron he is, we may see in the following rather long passage:—

I do not see [he says] why sinners of genius should be inveighed against as *ipso facto* greater sinners than average men. . . . There is no use blinking the fact . . . that riot, self-indulgence, and the irregular life Byron lived made him just the great specific poetic personality he was—the very interpreter of his time. . . . What would this man have done if he had 'lived at home and at ease'? if he had gone out shooting all his life with Sir Ralph Milbanke, and only listened over his wine to that 'damnable monologue which elderly gentlemen are pleased to call conversation'? He might have gone to church at Kirkby Mallory on Sunday, fulfilling in every way the decalogue, and the whole duty of an Englishman; but he would not have written the concluding cantos of 'Childe Harold,' 'Cain,' 'Manfred,' or 'Don Juan'; he would not have been Byron; for Sorrow and Sin trod his spirit as their wine-press, and lo! the blood-red wine of Genius, with omnipotent aroma, expressed in bitter anguish and boundless despair.

They learn in sorrow what they teach in song.

All honor to 'deaneries,' and 'angels' in balmorals, and clerical lawns for croquet. But volcanoes and earthquakes too are needed, or they would not *be*. . . . All are not fitted for the domestic ideal, though only fools or knaves fail to feel that, when fulfilled by high human natures, it is the very noblest, as surely, with one dear woman and sweet children, it is the happiest; the obvious and true ideal of our civilized majority. But in some there remains the wild blood of the nomad, and dweller in tents of Ishmael; these, whether they be artists or explorers, soldiers or sailors, have their true Bohemian function elsewhere, and are simply thrown away upon drawing-rooms and deaneries, however decorous. There are too, for that matter, women who must be single, and are better so; Aspasia here and there, it may be; students and devotees of knowledge, monks, ascetics and such-like abnormal persons; hero-martyrs on occasion of some ideal cause; none of them fitted for the honorable incumbency of a family; yet it may easily happen that some of these will mistake their vocation, or perish in the vain attempt to reconcile vocations that prove incompatible. Let not, however, what one has called our 'unlovely temple of *comfort*' be regarded as though it were the very temple of God!

Mr. Noel is inclined to exercise a large charity towards the poets who are dead, and to grant a wide license to those who are living. His attitude toward the Nature-school and the fleshly school in poetry are pretty fairly indicated in what we have quoted. He discusses at length, in his various essays, Chatterton, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Hugo, Browning, Tennyson, Robert Buchanan, and Walt Whitman, as well as Lord Byron. In form and style he is elegant, rich in illustration, a little blinded by his own radiance, a good deal misled, perhaps, by his enthusiasms. He finds it possible to harmonize men of the most opposite dispositions and theories of poetry that seem to most critics to destroy each other; and he is quite indignant with critics who find themselves unable to do this.

"Whom God Hath Joined."*

THIS novel opens in a very promising manner, and through several chapters leads us to feel that a fresh, strong hand has grasped the novelist's pen. The description of the home-life and the youthful development of Katherine, a tender flower in the midst of a hard environment, reminds us of George Eliot, her sympathy with childhood and the simple ministries of home. This is all so well told, with so true a realism and a human sympathy so delicious, that through the first dozen chapters our expectations for the book rose to a very high pitch. As the plot unfolded, however, and Katherine grew into blooming young womanhood, there came a disappointment. The bright unclouded morning became a misty mid-day and a dismal afternoon. The promising spring grew into an unfruitful summer. Our hopes were doomed to grief; and the bright study of life became a didactic plea for a particular theology as the social and moral force of life. At least, this is the conclu-

* Whom God Hath Joined. A Novel. By Elizabeth Gilbert Martin. \$2.25. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

sion at which the book seems to arrive, that there can be no true marriage outside the Catholic Church.

The process by which this conclusion is arrived at is one with which we can have no sympathy whatever. It is not a method of reasoning about the validity of doctrines, or of historic study into the claims of one church above those of another, but of intuition on the part of the lovers. They are made to come into contact, sooner or later, with all churches and denominations, and they pass judgment upon all. They criticise freely, or the author does it for them; but it is very sure that not all believers will be contented with the interpretations here given of the religious bodies to which they belong. All creeds fall short, all denominations are found wanting; but from the first, the lovers are mysteriously led towards the Catholic Church. That had attractions for them from childhood, though they were reared in the midst of such religious teachings as might have led them to hate it. They were long kept from it, and from finding that it could alone satisfy the cravings of their souls. At last, they were led into it; but only to find that there are new difficulties in their way. The law of the Catholic Church on the subject of divorce made it impossible for them to continue their married life, the hero having previously been deceived into a marriage from which he had not been released in the only manner which could satisfy the claims of the Church. In the end, however, the first wife dies, and the lovers reunite their broken lives and remain faithful to the Church they love so earnestly.

There is but one argument presented in this book for the Catholic Church, and that is its adherence to the New Testament law of divorce. This may be a valid claim for that Church, and a very good one; but we do not believe it is a valid motive for a novel. Had the didactic aim been wholly excluded, and the artistic one permitted to have a free expression, we believe this would have been a strong novel. There is so much that is good in it that it makes us quite impatient with its crudities and absurdities. The characters are not given a natural development, they are not moulded according to the supreme laws of nature and of fact, but are perverted and bedeviled in the name of a special theory. This is not the place or occasion for a discussion of the claims of the Catholic Church or of its laws on the subject of divorce; but it is the place and occasion for a protest against the methods of novel-writing pursued in this book. The aim of the novel should be artistic, or else it should be purely narrative. To introduce purely didactic motives is to pervert the novel and to mystify the truth they are called in to support. The moment the delightful Katherine becomes the victim of a theological intention she loses her charms, and from being natural and lovable becomes disagreeable and disappointing. The story is worked out with much ingenuity, with many bold strokes and with vigor in character delineation; but it leaves behind a feeling that we have been deceived. Reading the book wholly from an artistic point of view, as we have done, we find it wanting in a worthy motive, a right method and a legitimate conclusion.

Gogol, Tourguéneff and Tolstoi.*

WE have in Ernest Dupuy's book, translated by Mr. Dole, an interesting characterization of the three great Russian prose writers Gogol, Tourguéneff, and Tolstoi—the trinity upon whom all eyes are now turned. Mons. Dupuy is a Frenchman who knows Russian literature familiarly enough, and writes of it with fulness of knowledge and ingenuity of touch. We cannot know too much of the three points of the great Russian prose triangle—the Tartar-faced Gogol, Tourguéneff ('the incarnation of a whole race,' as Renan called him), and Count Tolstoi the mystic, who is a kind of cross between a Quaker and a socialist. Translations of the novels and short stories of these men are begin-

ning to teem. The paper libraries are filled with them, and their scattered leaves and lives are being bound in handsome volumes for the instruction of the extra-Slav world. They are the three great fiction-writers of eastern Europe, as different from their western kin as the Tartar domes and pinnacles of the Kremlin are from an Arabian mosque or a Gothic cathedral—quaint, strange, powerful, ill-favored, it may be, but striking and commanding. It is very hard usually to give a definite individuality to the Russian race, to describe a Russian in terms, to hit upon his cardinal characteristic; but with these three Russians there is no such difficulty. Gogol, the keen-featured commemorator of Cossack legend, teeming with his strange fertility of witch-story and poetical experience, half centaur, half human, as he courses through the wonderful folk-lore of Poles and Malo-Russians, understanding both animal and human life around him; Tourguéneff, the poet, the *improvisatore*, the delightful talker, full of beauty and poetry as a tube of Artois is of water, the great valve, one may say, through which poured intermittently the soul of the whole Slav race in its babbling abundance; Tolstoi, in whom are concentrated all the mystic longings, the secret hankerings, the religiosity, the contemplative spirit of Russia: such are the three writers who are presented to us in Mons. Dupuy's essays. His method of treatment is partly biographical, partly critical, partly analytical. There is no special profundity in it, but it leaves a clear image behind of each writer, in a fashion eminently French. There is a peculiar affinity, for some reason or other, between French and Russian—which is not marvellous, if we consider how often Tolstoi, for instance, recalls Jean Jacques Rousseau. The two, in certain senses, seem to lie on the same equator. But it remains to be seen whether the complex, many-sided Slav nature can come to us in all its truthfulness and fidelity through a Gallic filter. Does not the quintessence elude the sieve, and remain behind? Must we not go direct to the Russian and bring our Gogol, our Tourguéneff, our Tolstoi without filter and without amalgamation thence? Wine-growers tell us that three or four different kinds of wine can be made out of the same grape with the slightest possible difference of treatment. This may account for our having an English, a French and a German Tourguéneff, all more or less different.

Recent Fiction.

MRS. JACKSON'S beautiful story of 'Ramona' has received the compliment of a translation into German, by Elizabeth H. Denio (Leipzig: Georg Böhme). The translation is well done, and the story preserves its flavor of, not merely American life, but a peculiar phase of American life.—'A WICKED GIRL' (Harper's Handy Series) is inferior in quality to most of the work given us by Mary Cecil Hay. Its incidents are strained, improbable, and not particularly interesting, and there is less of grace in the telling than there was in this favorite novelist's earlier work, much of which was admirable.—THE short stories included in the two issues of Cassell's Select Library called 'A Wife's Confession' and 'The Great Gold Secret' are rather the best that have appeared in the series so far. They are unpretentious, but cost only fifteen cents, and may therefore be said to give the reader his money's worth.—'TWO PINCHES OF SNUFF,' by William Westall (Franklin Square Library), is a rather ingenious and entertaining tale of a bank-robbery. One of the chief actors is made insensible by one pinch of a strange snuff offered him by the robber, and recovers his mind only after the operation of trepanning, and the suggestive shock of being again offered a pinch of snuff, harmless this time, and producing the missing link of evidence in the weakened brain.

'THE NEW MAN AT ROSSMERE' (Cassell) is the best of Mrs. J. H. Walworth's stories so far. It shows more of

* The Great Masters of Russian Literature. By Ernest Dupuy. Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole. With portraits. \$1.25. New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co.

the dramatic sense of construction, and is a realistic picture of the varied contrasts between Northern and Southern ideas of life, as shown when the two came face to face after the War. The author vouches for the actual occurrence in real life of the most extraordinary incidents, and the whole makes a very readable story.—'MARY'S MEADOW' (E. & J. B. Young & Co.) is another of Mrs. Ewing's delicious little tales, written for children and about children, but with fine touches that only the elders can fully appreciate. It is an account of the gardening exploits of a family of children, and is full of delightful humor; the little people being admirable types of the human nature of grown folk.—'THE CHAMBER OVER THE GATE,' by Margaret Holmes (Indianapolis: Charles A. Bates), is an extremely unpleasant story, intended to show that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children. There is certainly plenty of sin in it, the moral being that not only are the consequences of sin visited on innocent children, but that sin itself is repeated in guilty ones; but the story is too unwholesome to be of use as a moral or a warning, and is certainly a very uninteresting tale.—'THE RIVERSIDE MUSEUM,' by Jak, (Crowell) is a sequel to 'Birchwood,' which we have already had the pleasure of commending. The sequel deals with the effort of the young people, not only to stock their museum, but to learn all about the specimens with which they stock it, and much information is worked in with the story. One of the most amusing chapters recounts the queer adventures of an enthusiastic naturalist, who thinks nothing, or rather thinks a great deal, of a snake or two curled up on his window-seat.

THERE is something incongruous in the name of 'Hawthorne' on the back of so flimsy and meagre a piece of work as 'John Parmelee's Curse' (Cassell). It is merely a series of sensational, but not very original incidents, strung together without the slightest effort at art or effect of grace. Mr. Parmelee's 'curse' is opium, but as an opium-story, the story will not compare in power with one by E. P. Roe. Mrs. Parmelee becomes the slave of opium, as so many better people have, through its alleviating power in pain; but Mr. Parmelee takes to it, after witnessing its frightful effect upon his wife, because he loves her so that he wishes to be with her in her degradation! This strikes the keynote of the whole miserable story, which is eked out by a not very startling bank-robbery, a not very new opium-den, a preposterous little girl and a mock-heroic street gamin. All that is new in the story is absurd, and the slipshod nature of the style would go far to destroy the effect of even a better plot.

'THE ONE THING NEEDFUL' (Franklin Square Library) shows on its very first page the readableness which is the one undeniable quality of Miss Braddon's work. Love is, of course, the thing needful; and prepared with plenty of that, Miss Braddon succeeds in her novel as the heroine does in her life.—'A PLAYWRIGHT'S DAUGHTER,' by Mrs. Annie Edwardes (Harper's Handy Series), is an admirably told story. It is not the story, but the telling of it, that is striking, for we have had much the same material before, but seldom do we have such spirit in the rendering of a more than twice-told tale.—'APHRODITE,' translated by Mary J. Safford from the German of Ernst Eckstein (Gottberger), is a romance of ancient Hellas at once graceful, classic, and interesting. It is fuller of incident and conversation and plot than historical novels are apt to be, is bright with color as well as with local color, and while giving vividly the spirit of ancient times, gives us also an entertaining story.—THAT Col. Fred Burnaby died before revising, or even finishing, his novel of 'Our Radicals' (Harper's Handy Series), should perhaps be a reasonable excuse for some of its crudities; but it is doubtful whether any amount of re-writing could have made anything of much

value out of what now reads like an exceedingly absurd dime-novel. 'Radical' is employed by the author apparently as a synonym for Fenian, Conspirator, Murderer, etc., and the awful plots concocted in the course of the tale are very nearly ridiculous in spite of their awfulness, while the romance is wholly so.

IT IS A pleasure to find a new story by Miss McClelland, whose first novel, 'Oblivion,' was so interesting and artistic. 'Princess' (Holt's Leisure Season Series) has the same clear-cut style, artistic finish, and piquant coloring, and is filled with the same shrewd observation, comment, and picturing. The story is the old one of an unhappily married man wooing an unsuspecting girl, and the treatment at first bids fair to be so satisfactory, that it is a disappointment to find after all that in the opinion of the author love is enough. The hero is less fascinating than most of the graceless ones of fiction, which accounts, perhaps, for the reader's feeling less than the usual sympathy and tolerance. His gracelessness is about all we learn of him, and our enjoyment is keenest when 'Princess' at first sends him to the right about. But the make-up of the story is delightful.—'POVERTY GRASS,' by Lillie Chace Wyman (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), is a collection of powerful and well-told short stories, dealing with the harder side of the cold and poor New England life. The touch is at once strong and sympathetic; the stories, though the old ones of grinding poverty, miserable environment, and hopeless struggle, are original in treatment, touching and suggestive.

Minor Notices.

W. F. DANA'S Bowdoin Prize Essay on 'The Optimism of Ralph Waldo Emerson' makes a little volume of some sixty pages (Cupples, Upham & Co.), in which the author cites Byron, Tennyson, Swinburne, Longfellow, De Musset, Sand, Goethe, Leopardi and others as typical of the prevailing pessimistic thought of the century; finds the cause of this wide-spread despondency and despair in the loss of faith in a revealed religion; and shows how to Emerson, more than to any other man of his time, 'belongs the high praise of teaching that our human life is worth living.' Though without any philosophical system deserving the name, though often fragmentary, mystical and unmeaning, and though not wholly satisfied with the present, Emerson met the pressing questions of humanity with vigor, serenity and hope, and from his large, cheerful nature gave answers full of comfort and encouragement. Mr. Dana's essay is expository rather than critical, and while not strikingly original in thought or expression is very creditable as a college thesis.

Sancta numina colens is a phrase peculiarly applicable to Charles Lamb and Oliver Goldsmith. 'Sacred divinities' indeed are gentle Elia and Old Noll who 'wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll'; and every successive effort to rehabilitate and re-pedestal their shattered images—if indeed they need rehabilitation—is alike a pleasure and a duty. Mr. W. Carew Hazlitt pursues the Lambs like a genuine wolf—pursues and prints to the last scrap everything they ever wrote. In two stout new volumes of the Bohn Library (Scribner & Welford), we have Talfourd's delightful memoir—delightful to us from early association; and, in addition to other old documents and letters, many new ones discovered and arranged by Mr. Hazlitt. Though Talfourd's 'inaccuracy and slovenliness are little less than miraculous,' his 'Final Memorials' of Lamb were always charming reading; and if they serve no other purpose than to call forth new editions, new arrangements, new documents relating to one of the *numina* of the language, we for one shall not regret it. The correspondence of such men as Charles Lamb, Walpole, and Southey has a permanent value, and constitutes a treasure-house quite as valuable as

that of Mycenæ. As to Goldsmith, what sweeter genius ever lived? and what a privilege to perfume this rank age with his lavender and rosemary! Vol. IV. of the new edition of his Works, revised and enlarged by J. W. M. Gibbs, contains many hitherto unacknowledged or unprinted prose criticisms, essays, and omitted passages from Goldsmith's Biographies. (Bohn's Library: Scribner & Welford.) One may now say his *credo* and his *ubi consistam* thoroughly, so far as Goldsmith is concerned.—'OLD SCHOOL-DAYS,' by Amanda B. Harris, illustrated (Chicago: Interstate Pub. Co.), is an account of the district school of forty years ago, containing nothing very new or striking, but preserving a few queer little anecdotes, and giving certainly a picture in great contrast with the schools of to-day, which are a practical delight to pupils who are no longer victims.

Concerning Female Authors.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CRITIC:

THERE is a very interesting subject on which some able and well-informed writer ought to make a book. The subject I have in view is the female authors of all ages and nations. Such a book is needed not only by those women and men who make it their special work to defend and enlarge woman's rights, but by all students of civilization in general and of literature in particular. Of course there are good essays, and even books, on some celebrated female writers; but what is needed is a satisfactory work of the whole subject. The literary productions of women give us the best insight into the soul of woman. Woman as she is, without any reserve, self-revealed and not interpreted by another sex, we can find only in the poems, novels, stories, dramas and other literary works composed by women themselves. I am inclined to suggest that even the book I am speaking about ought to be written rather by a woman than a man. It is but charitable to say that as yet man has not rid himself of those prejudices which make him undervalue woman's mind, heart, and will—her genius, I should say.

From the literary standpoint, the works of the female *literati* afford a vast and fruitful field of study. Classical Greece gave to the world Sappho, a 'high, lyrical genius which was the admiration of antiquity from Solon downwards, and which, as still surviving in her matchless Ode to Aphrodite, enhances our regret that of the nine books of her poems, we only possess fragments.' Turning to France we behold three shining literary stars. Madame Roland left us her celebrated Memoirs, in which she skilfully depicted the greatest revolution that has ever taken place in history. The Baroness de Staël, the only woman whom Napoleon I. watched and feared, will be classed among writers of the first rank. But for Napoleon's dread of her influence, literature would not have had her 'Ten Years of Exile'; and her countrymen could ill afford to miss her remarkable essay 'De l'Allemagne.' George Sand (Madame Dudevant) stands as a novelist on a level with any of the sterner sex. England may well be proud of producing such a literary master as George Eliot, in whom we find the strongest vindication of woman's capacity. When her work is considered, who can say that woman is necessarily man's inferior in intellect and in literary art?

Passing by the German authoresses, such as Elisabeth Glück (known as Betty Paoli), and the Queen of Roumania (Sylva Carmen) and the American female writers of fame (such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Gail Hamilton, Julia Ward Howe, the late Mrs. Jackson and others), I will say a few words of the Russian female writers, for they are the least known. As a literary artist Catherine II. surpassed many Russian male writers of her time. The Countess Endoxy Rostopchin (usually called the Moscow Sappho, 1811-1858) was feared by Tsar Nicholas as much as Madame de Staël was feared by Napoleon. She, too, like her French sister, passed many years in exile. To Countess Rostopchin it

was as natural to rhyme as to others to speak. She was always ready to express her views in verse on every political event, and what she said became public opinion. Her political poem, 'The Forced Marriage,' in which she portrayed the relations between Russia and Poland, was regarded by the Tsar as an incentive to the Polish revolution. She was a prolific writer; stories, novels, poems and dramas flowed from her pen; but her fame rests on her short poems. Pushkin, Lermontoff and Gogol, the greatest Russian poets, treated her as their equal. Julia Jadovsky (born 1825) came into the world without her left arm, and with only three fingers on her right hand. Though of noble and rich parents, she was left without education, but educated herself. Before reaching twenty she began to contribute her poems and songs to different journals, and they were at once noted and praised. Some of the best Russian popular songs were of her writing. Her muse was infinitely sad. It is said of her songs that they were written, not with ink, but with tears. One of her novels, 'Asides of High Life,' belongs to the best productions of the kind. Vsevolod Krestovsky (*nom de plume* of Nadejda Hvostchinsky, born 1825) is rightly considered as the best female novelist of Russia, of whom there are a good many. Of her numerous novels 'The Big Bear' is recognized as the best. She has written also a number of good poems. In this short sketch I cannot render justice to all the authoresses even of the first class; what I aim at is merely to call attention to the fact that a book on female authors is much needed.

NEW YORK, August, 1886.

P. J. POPOFF.

Charleston.

IS THIS the price of beauty! Fairest, thou,
Of all the cities of the sunrise sea,
Yet thrice art stricken. First war harried thee;
Then the dread circling tempest drove its plow
Right through thy palaces; and now, O now!
A sound of terror, and thy children flee
Into the night and death. O Deity!
Thou God of war, and whirlwind, and whose brow
Frowning makes tremble sea and solid land!
These are thy creatures who to heaven cry
While hell roars 'neath them, and its portals ope:
To thee they call—to thee who bidst them die,
And hast forgotten to withhold thy hand,—
For thou, Destroyer, art man's only hope!

SEPTEMBER, 1886.

R. W. GILDER.

The Summer Rain.

SWEET, blessed summer rain—ah me!
The drifting cloud-land spills
God's mercy on the dotted lea
And on the tented hills;

Yet is there more than shrouded sky,
And more than falling rain,
Or swift-borne souls of flowers that fly
Breeze-lifted from the plain:

Strange joy comes with the freshening gust,
The whitening of the leaves,
The smell of sprinkled summer dust,
The dripping of the eaves;

The soul stirs with the melting clod,
The drenched field's silent mirth:—
Who does not feel his heart help God
To bless the thirsting earth?

Oh rain—oh blessed summer rain!—
Not on the fields, alone,
Nor woodlands, fall, nor flowery plain,
But on the heart of stone!

ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

The Lounger

I AM informed on good authority that Mr. De Witt Seligman, of the well-known family of bankers, is about to establish a weekly paper in this city, to deal with live issues of the day, particularly those of a political character. Mr. Seligman has plenty of money, and is anxious to make a good paper; and with the right man as editor, there is nothing to prevent his doing so. The first issue will probably appear some time in October, and from what I hear of its projector's intentions it will be welcomed to a place which may be said to be unfilled.

I DON'T KNOW of a more amusing book than could be made from the experiences of editors. It seems to me, from those I have heard them relate, that they come in contact with as strange a set of men and women as treads the earth. The professional author is not without his peculiarities; but the amateur, or would-be author, is akin to the amateurs of no other trade or profession. The idea that a pen, a bottle of ink, and a sufficient quantity of paper are the only essentials to successful authorship, seems to be widespread. No man, because his bank account was reduced, would walk into a plumber's shop and ask to be given a job; nor would he expect to practise at the bar without some preparation; but to be an author he thinks he has only to write.

NOT LONG SINCE, a gentleman with a roll of manuscripts under his arm called upon the editor of a well-known magazine, and said that he would like to contribute to its columns. He said that he had looked over the various articles published in the —, and found many which he could have written as easily as not. 'For instance,' said he, in an off-hand way, 'there's "The Lady and the Tiger";' *that's* the sort of thing I can do! Another gentleman called upon the same editor, told him he was a clergyman with a country parish, and that writing sermons and visiting his flock did not occupy all his time. Indeed, he had quite a good deal of leisure—more leisure in fact than money; and if he could turn this time to pecuniary account, he would very much like it. For want of something better to say, the editor inquired, 'What sort of writing do you mean?' 'Oh, I'm not particular,' he replied; 'either original or copying!'

EVERY one who has crossed the ocean knows that just before sailing into port an entertainment is given on board the steamer for the benefit of the Seamen's Orphan's Home, at Liverpool. Whenever there are any professional singers or actors on board, a very good performance is given, and one that clears a handsome sum for this deserving charity. It is, to be sure, something of a bore to the Pattis, Kelloggs, Nilssons, Irvings, Terrys, etc., who cross the ocean, but they always give their services cheerfully. Miss Kellogg has sung at these entertainments probably as often as a dozen times; but two years ago, when asked, she refused to do so unless a part of the proceeds of the concert were given to some American charity. She argued that the greater number of travellers were Americans, and that it was their money and the services of American artists that supported the Home. Some people on the ship thought she was too patriotic, others agreed with her. This summer, in crossing the ocean to come home, she was invited to sing, and the captain told her at the same time that the stand she had taken about a 'division of the spoils' had had a good result, and that now one third of the proceeds were given to the orphans of American sailors.

A LETTER TO THE LOUNGER:—'I have been hoping that a subject of curious and profound study with me might fall within the line of your observation and sagacious comment; but so far I have been disappointed. I am desirous of knowing what relation, if any, subsists between ill health and the thrifty occupation of collecting autographs. My own small experience (differing probably from that of my brother and sister writers only in volume, not in kind) leads me to remark the great (relative) number of persons who are valetudinary and who at the same time pursue the pleasant vocation referred to. I have in my head the general form of the letters received from such persons. Beginning with the statement, "I have been an invalid for many years," they inform you of the pains they have taken with their collection, and conclude delicately with the flattering assurance that said collection would be deemed "incomplete without your autograph." Now I would seriously like to know if the state of invalidism of which these persons complain antedated the autograph-hunting, or was the former a concomitant of the latter?

I could understand how the autograph-hunted might be invalidated in the course of time; but whether the same condition is incident to the estate of the hunter I am ignorant. I trust you have data which will clear up this uncertainty. AN ANXIOUS AUTOGRAPHER.—P. S. Pray do not shy at the experimental word *autographer*, which has as regular an etymology as *biographer* and which must be recognized as a necessary term to express a constantly growing occupation.'

J. P. LAMBERTON writes from Philadelphia:—'In THE CRITIC of August 14 you give a letter from Mr. Henry Blackwell about Charles Kingsley's visit to Pen-y-Gwyrd, Carnarvonshire, Wales, with extracts from the verses scribbled in the inn-book there by Kingsley and his friends Tom Hughes and Tom Taylor. It may be worth while to mention that all the verses have already found an appropriate place in the Memoir of Charles Kingsley, edited by his wife. In the one-volume edition, published by Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York, 1877, they occupy pages 252-4.'

I AM REMINDED by an article in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, entitled 'Death among the Summer Flowers,' of a singular experience the poet Swinburne described some years ago in a letter to Paul H. Hayne. The author of 'Atalanta in Calydon' happened to fall asleep in a room where there were some Indian lilies of powerful perfume. When he awoke, in two or three hours, he found himself dangerously poisoned. His sickness and suffering were extreme; and it occurred to him that here was an episode that Poe might have turned to excellent account. Mr. Hayne promised to ask his correspondent's permission to let me print the interesting letter in which this misadventure was described, but at the time of his death it had not reached him; or if it had, he had failed to forward it.

The Fine Arts

Art in Cincinnati.*

DURING the nine years of its existence, Mrs. Perry was the honored and efficient President of The Women's Art Museum Association of Cincinnati. From this it appears that in Cincinnati art has always found appreciation and encouragement. As long ago as 1838, there was an Academy of Fine Arts, composed of artists and amateurs, holding meetings for practice and giving exhibitions. Then there was the Western Art Union, of 1847, with objects and methods similar to the old American. Next came the Ladies' Academy of Fine Arts, in 1854, which raised nearly \$10,000 during its first year, made a fine beginning toward a collection of pictures and statuary, and established a School of Design, subsequently endowed by Mr. Longworth. Later were formed the Associated Artists of Cincinnati, and another Academy of Fine Arts, both with the ultimate aim of creating a permanent gallery. The Women's Art Museum Association was the outgrowth of the Centennial Committee, and was organized in 1877. Its purpose was indicated in its name, and as means toward the end, courses of free lectures were given, a loan exhibition, netting the treasury a thousand dollars, was held, classes were formed, and public interest was further awakened and kept alive by the newspapers. Hence, when at the opening of the Industrial Exposition of 1880 it was announced that Mr. Charles W. West had offered \$150,000 as a fund for an art building, provided the citizens would give as much within a year, the people were ready, and in a month had subscribed \$160,116. Mr. West afterward, for the purpose of endowing a collection of art works, duplicated his first gift. A new Museum Association being formed, of men, the Women's Association in due time made a transfer of its collections, classes, furniture, etc., and was dissolved. The Museum building was dedicated and opened to the public in May last. Precisely why the management should not have been left in the hands of the ladies who had shown themselves so competent and energetic in attaining the desired result, is not evident. Mrs. Perry's 'sketch' will prove very suggestive and helpful for other localities.

* A Sketch of the Women's Art Museum Association of Cincinnati. By Elizabeth W. Perry. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co.

Ebers on Alma Tadema.*

THIS is a graceful tribute of friendship, and as such is interesting to the general public. Ebers is not an art-critic and does not attempt to write as one. His praise of his distinguished friend is, at times, fulsome. Alma Tadema comes from the country of Hobbema, and his name is pronounced in the same way. As nine Americans out of ten persist in calling him Tade'ma it is pleasant to have printed authority for placing the accent on the first syllable. Although a Dutchman, he belongs by training and natural impulse to the Belgian historical school. His first masters were De Keyser and Wappers. Later he became a pupil of Baron Leys. His first important pictures represented scenes from the lives of the Merovingian kings. They were fine works of their kind. It was his trip to Italy which gave him his impulse toward classic subjects, and especially those in which the daily life of ancient Rome is so sympathetically depicted. It is interesting and significant to learn that from 1856 to 1880, Tadema's native country, Holland, did not invest more than a thousand florins in his pictures. In fact, his popular and pecuniary success dates from the year he established himself in London. Tadema's ability is undoubted, but all the same he presents the most striking example known of the value of that factitious London recognition which has made the fortune of so many painters. Townsend House, the Gold Room and the famous Byzantine piano have done quite as much for Tadema as his archaeological knowledge, his feeling for the antique, and his painstaking technique. The illustrations are poor, but they serve to give an idea of the artist's works.

Mark Twain's Advice to Young Authors.

LITERATURE, like the ministry, medicine, the law, and all other occupations, is cramped and hindered for want of men to do the work, not want of work to do. When people tell you the reverse, they speak that which is not true. If you desire to test this, you need only hunt up a first-class editor, reporter, business manager, foreman of a shop, mechanic, or artist in any branch of industry, and try to hire him. You will find that he is already hired. He is sober, industrious, capable, and reliable, and is always in demand. He cannot get a day's holiday except by courtesy of his employer, or of his city, or of the great general public. But if you need idlers, shirkers, half-instructed, unambitious, and comfort-seeking editors, reporters, lawyers, doctors, and mechanics, apply anywhere. There are millions of them to be had at the dropping of a handkerchief.

No. I must not, and will not, venture any opinion whatever as to the literary merit of your productions. The public is the only critic whose judgment is worth anything at all. Do not take my poor word for this, but reflect a moment and take your own. For instance, if Sylvanus Cobb or T. S. Arthur had submitted their MSS. to you, you would have said with tears in your eyes, 'Now, please don't write any more!' But you see yourself how popular they are. And if it had been left to you, you would have said that 'The Marble Faun' was tiresome, and that even 'Paradise Lost' lacked cheerfulness; but you know they sell. Many wiser and better men than you pooh-poohed Shakespeare even as late as two centuries ago, but still that old party has out-lived those people. No; I will not sit in judgment upon your literature. If I honestly and conscientiously praised it, I might thus help to inflict a lingering and pitiless bore upon the public; if I honestly and conscientiously condemned it, I might thus rob the world of an undeveloped and unsuspected Dickens or Shakspeare.

I shrink from hunting up literary labor for you to do and receive pay for. Whenever your literary productions have proved for themselves that they have a real value, you will never have to go around hunting for remunerative literary work to do. You will require more hands than you have now, and more brains than you probably ever will have, to do even half the work that will be offered you. Now, in order to arrive at the proof of value hereinbefore spoken of, one needs only to adopt a very simple and certainly very sure process—and that is, to write without pay until somebody offers pay. If nobody offers pay within three years, the candidate may look upon this cir-

cumstance with the most implicit confidence that sawing wood is what he was intended for. If he has any wisdom at all, then he will retire with dignity, and assume his heaven-appointed vocation.

The young literary aspirant is a very, very curious creature. He knows that if he wished to become a tinner the master-smith would require him to prove the possession of a good character and would require him to promise to stay in the shop three years—possibly four—and would make him sweep out and bring water and build fires all the first year, and let him learn to black stoves in the intervals. If he wanted to become a mechanic of any other kind, he would have to undergo this same tedious ill-paid apprenticeship. If he wanted to become a lawyer or a doctor, he would have fifty times worse, for he would get nothing at all during his long apprenticeship, and in addition would have to pay a large sum for tuition, and have the privilege of boarding and clothing himself. The literary aspirant knows all this, and yet he has the hardihood to present himself for reception into the literary guild, and ask to share its high honors and emoluments, without a single twelvemonth's apprenticeship to show in excuse for his presumption. He would smile pleasantly if he were asked even to make so simple a thing as a ten-cent tin dipper without previous instruction in the art; but, all green and ignorant, wordy, pompously assertive, ungrammatical, and with a vague, distorted knowledge of men and the world, acquired in a back country village, he will serenely take up so dangerous a weapon as a pen, and attack the most formidable subject that finance, commerce, war, or politics can furnish him withal. It would be laughable if it were not so sad and so pitiable. The poor fellow would not intrude upon the tin-shop without an apprenticeship, but is willing to seize and wield with unpractised hand an instrument which is able to overthrow dynasties, change religions, and decree the weal or woe of nations.

If my correspondent will write free of charge for the newspapers of his neighborhood, it will be one of the strangest things that ever happened if he does not get all the employment he can attend to on those terms. And as soon as ever his writings are worth money, plenty of people will hasten to offer it.

And, by the way of serious and well-meant encouragement, I wish to urge upon him once more the truth that acceptable writers for the press are so scarce that book and periodical publishers are seeking them constantly, and with a vigilance that never grows heedless for a moment.

Vers de Société.

[The Spectator.]

THOUGH we cannot find it an English name, and though no English critic has yet been able to discover a satisfactory definition, we all know well enough what is *vers de société*, and what is not. We can recognize its strongest features, if we cannot tell all its changing colors. We know that though it comes near, it never quite touches burlesque. We know that it is never bitter enough for satire, or broad enough for comedy. It never really moves us, though a touch of pathos, only half expressed and only half believed in, is its most effective resource. It is never serious; but then, it is never thoughtless,—for it is never dull. It sometimes affects to be innocent, but yet is never childish, for it always appeals to men and women. It will own the aid of as much scholarship as amuses the well-read people of the world; but it is never pedantic. In style it is faultless; but though it requires an absolute perfection, the perfection is its own, for, notwithstanding that the workmanship must be fine and thorough in every part, it must not be the workmanship of inspiration. Dresden figures want as much work on them as small Greek bronzes, but the work must differ in kind. There must be no heaven-sent harmonies, only plenty of well-devised melody. Then, too, its subjects are always men and women, and not only men and women, but men and women of the world. But, though it is always of the world, it is never the song of the person of quality, or the mere chronicle of the Court. Its heroines are valued not because they are duchesses, but because they are handsome, witty, and famous. If it occupies itself with little things, they are the little things of great people.

It is very seldom that a real poet is a successful writer of *vers de société*. Every now and then he cannot help a touch of inspiration, and blows through the reed as if it were a trumpet,—and then the reed is broken. When English poetry was at its best, not only did the poets write no *vers de société*, but there were no *vers de société* writers at all. It is true that Sir Walter Raleigh wrote one pretty quatrain which had so much the true

* Lorenz Alma Tadema. From the German of Georg Ebers. 40 cts. New York: William S. Gottsberger.

ring in it, that in the age when such verse was most appreciated, the wielder of the diamond-pointed pencil deemed it worthy to be produced as his own impromptu. Who could have supposed, when Chesterfield wrote out the charming lines,—

Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty ;
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity ;—

that he was quoting from the unpolished age of Elizabeth. No wonder the 'little tea-table scoundrel,' as George II. loved to call him, felt quite certain he would not be detected. Ben Jonson, it is true, every now and then gives us a line or two that is pure *vers de société* ; but he, again, was too inspired a poet to bear the necessary restraint successfully. Chloris's description of the man who could please her is very near ; but just as it is settling down into the proper swing, comes a rushing wind of poetry that carries us into a very different region, and bids us breathe a very different air. It is not till we reach the age of the second Charles—for during his father's reign the overflowing fancy and imagination of the poets still continued to forbid success—that we find the real beginning of the 'Poetry of life and manners.' Of these, by far the greatest is Congreve. Sedley gets very near, but he is always in the end too satirical or too passionate. For instance, the admirably turned verse,—

All that in woman is adored
In thy dear self I find ;
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind ;—

is infinitely too strong a satire ; while the exquisite quatrain,—

Were I of all these woods the lord,
One berry from your hand
More real pleasure would afford,
Than all my large command ;—

is true poetry. Congreve, in his 'Amoret,' has given us an absolute touchstone for the true manner. Nothing can be imagined more perfect as *vers de société* than :—

Fair Amoret is gone astray !
Pursue and seek her, every Lover ;
I'll tell the signs by which you may
The wandering Shepherdess discover.

Coquet and coy at once her air ;
Both study'd, though both seem neglected ;
Careless she is with artful care,
Affecting to seem unaffected.

Congreve, however, did not write very much that is as perfect as this. His 'Doris' is too bitter. Yet one verse, if it were not for a horrible cockney rhyme, is charming. We quote it as the awful example :—

Whom she refuses, she treats still
With so much sweet behavior,
That her refusal, through her skill,
Looks almost like a favor.

Hardly, except in 'Amoret,' is the ideal obtained by Congreve. 'False though she be to me and love' is just too tender and too pathetic ; while 'Tell me no more I am deceived' is too brutal. The next age, or rather, Congreve's later contemporaries, are prolific enough in *vers de société*. First, by many degrees of merit, stands Prior. He exactly understood the rules of his art, and followed them with the happiest effect. What, for instance, could be more enchantingly delicate than the lines which begin, 'The merchant, to secure his treasure ?' Yet more perfect are the 'Lines to a Child of Quality, Five Years Old.' There is nothing in literature happier than the verses in which the poet laments that no one will even object to his suit :—

For while she makes her silkworms' beds
With all the tender things I swear,
Whilst all the house my passion reads,
In papers round her baby's hair.

She may receive and own my flame,
For though the strictest prudes shall know it,
She'll pass for a most virtuous dame
And I for an unhappy poet.

Prior, too, could manage to be lively, almost rollicking, without ceasing to be polished and well-bred, and without verging on burlesque or comedy. For instance, when Kitty is trying to get the chariot from her mother :—

Must Lady Jenny frisk about,
And visit with her cousins ?

At balls must she make all the rout,
And bring home hearts by dozens ?

Here Prior is pressing the line which separates him from pure comedy, but he does not pass it. *Vers de société* does not suit the couplet, and hence the greater Eighteenth-Century writers are not very prolific. Gay's manner is, in truth, very suitable, but in his works there is a certain languishing air which is seductive enough, especially in the mock pastorals, but yet cannot quite agree with the brightness and vitality inseparable from true *vers de société*. Pope is another instance to show that a real poet cannot write it. He was forever writing on suitable subjects, but his magnificent powers of style, his ear for verse which is always classic in spirit, even when most restricted and benumbed by sameness, and his splendid inspirations of expression, raise his verse to too high a level. He cannot compliment a second-rate Irish painter on his portraits of the beauties of the day without introducing so sonorous and so proudly worded a couplet as,—

Thus Churchill's race shall other hearts surprise,
And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes.

This is not workmanship fit for Dresden china ; it is more like what is required for the Venus of the Capitol, or the florid splendors of the Naples Juno. Yet once he taught his hand the exact touch. When he paid Mrs. Howard perhaps the prettiest compliment ever paid in the language of common-sense, he is exactly within the limits :—

I know the thing that's most uncommon
(Envy, be silent and attend !)
I know a reasonable woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.

Not warped by passion, aw'd by rumor,
Not grave thro' pride, or gay through folly,
An equal mixture of good-humor,
And sensible soft melancholy.

How different is this from the manner of 'The Rape of the Lock,' or of the 'Moral Essays !' There is no *vers de société* in the reflection :—

Oh ! blessed with temper whose unclouded ray
Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day ;
She who can love a sister's charms, or hear
Sighs for a daughter with unwounded ear ;
She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules ;
Charms by accepting, by submitting, sways,
Yet has her humor most, when she obeys.

Still less in the magnificent compliment to Martha Blount which ends the epistle :—

Reserve with frankness, art with truth allied,
Courage with softness, modesty with pride ;
Fixed principles, with fancy ever new ;
Shakes all together, and produces—you !

The 'Miscellanies,' which were forever appearing throughout the latter half of the Eighteenth Century, contain plenty of *vers de société* which, as far as subject and style go, may readily be admitted. The quality, however, is for the most part very indifferent. Charles Fox's rhymes are sometimes spoken of as excellent in their kind, but in truth they are not well enough worked to deserve to be called *vers de société*. Canning, in the next generation, is too much of a satirist, while Byron is too full of passion on the one hand, and comic force on the other. Yet some of his verses can properly be allowed under this head. The lines beginning, 'Huzza ! Hobhouse, we are going,' the song of 'The Spanish Ladies,' originally meant to be inserted in 'Childe Harold,' and 'Oh ! talk not to me of the names great in story,' might all be included. With Tom Moore it is very difficult to deal. We have no desire to speak of him with disrespect as a poet, but there is no denying that though he was always trying to catch the tone of *vers de société*, he never succeeded. When he puts any real feeling into his verses, as in 'Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,' he rises above the required level ; when he does not, his slipshod style, his shambling and pretentious melody, and his vulgarity of expression and thought, render him quite unworthy to strike the lyre of elegance. It is not till Præd began to write that we get again real perfection. It is not too much to say of him that he has nothing to learn in his particular art. He is never too gay, never too solemn. He is always breathing the air of good society, without ever the slightest fear of a vulgar slip to haunt the reader. He is as little likely to make an unmelodious line or an awkward sentence, as he is to perpetrate a dull joke or an

ill-bred phrase. He is easy without being slangy, mock-serious without burlesque, gay without grimaces. He has lightness uninjured by thoughtlessness, scholarship without pedantry, good breeding without pomposity or pride. Perhaps not the least delightful of the delightful reprints which the public is now being offered in exchange for its shillings and sixpences, is the little volume of selections from Præd in the 'Canterbury Poets.' We will not pledge ourselves to its being the best possible selection, but it fills a very great want, and makes Præd accessible to every one. With such a field, it is hardly possible to quote. Perhaps the last stanza of 'My Partner' is as representative as any, though somewhat hackneyed:—

Our love was like most other loves,
A little glow, a little shiver,
A rose-bud, and a pair of gloves,
And 'Fly not yet'—upon the river;
Some jealousy of some one's heir,
Some hopes of dying broken-hearted,
A miniature, a lock of hair,
The usual vows,—and then we parted.

Yet some admirers will insist on giving the palm to 'The Portrait of a Lady,' where the poet puts all the possible conjectures concerning the unnamed Academy portrait:—

I see they've brought you flowers to-day;
Delicious food for eyes and noses;
But carelessly you turn away
From all the pinks and all the roses.
Say, is that fond look sent in search
Of one whose look as fondly answers,
And is he fairest in the Church?
Or is he—ain't he—in the Lancers?

To see how absolutely essential is this lightness, and yet certainty of touch, we have only to turn to Thackeray. As poetry, as the work of a genius, how infinitely superior! but as *vers de société*, how much below Præd! 'The Cane-bottom'd Chair' is far too full of deep and tender sentiment, the 'Almack's Adieu' is too satirical. In the present generation, Mr. Frederick Locker alone has done anything to imitate Præd successfully. Some of his verse is, indeed, charming, and all of it is composed in the true manner. Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. Austin Dobson have both tried their hands at the difficult task. Mr. Lang, though he can write so pleasantly, has hardly enough 'go' about him. He is quaint, he is learned and ingenious, he is melodious; but his work is just too labored, just too pedantic, smells just too much of the study. Mr. Austin Dobson is a truer poet, but hardly hits the mark. We cannot call him a greater success. With him, somehow, the suburbs are always with us. Clapham is doubtless just as tender and true, and may be just as witty, as St. James's and Mayfair; and yet the verses that deal with the people who live in the latter, alone are tolerable as *vers de société*. Not that we for a moment suggest that Mr. Austin Dobson's verses have any particular local color. Our geographical allusion is solely by way of example. We only feel that, somehow or other, a society living, dancing, flirting, making puns, and talking politics in the widest sense, is the society which must be described, and that the slightly too decorous and thoughtful surroundings of the modern literary man are hardly the most suitable atmosphere for such verse. We cannot bid adieu to the subject before us without alluding to Mr. Frederick Locker's charming collection of *vers de société*. This anthology of exotics is indeed a delightful possession. Happy is the man who has his book-shelves full of them. Wise is the man who obtains a copy when he sees one in a sale-room or on a book-stall.

Current Criticism

A CENTENARIAN PROFESSOR.—There have been high jinks in Paris in celebration of the completion of the hundredth year of Michel Eugène Chevreul, the eminent chemist. New museums have been inaugurated at the Jardin des Plantes, where M. Chevreul has been employed since 1810; a statue of the hero has been unveiled; commemorative medals presented to him by the National Agricultural Society, of which he has long been President, by the Municipal Council, and by a group of students; deputations from numerous learned societies congratulated him; a great banquet was held at the Hôtel de Ville, followed by a grand festival, processions, bands and illuminations, and the *doyen des étudiants*, as he is called, finished the day by witnessing a special performance in his honor at the Opera, when he occupied the *loge* of the President of the Republic. No man, perhaps, has seen his country pass through so many revolutions and has lived under so many *régimes* as M. Chevreul. He re-

members Louis XVI. His recollections of the Revolution and the Directoire are clear though he was not then at Paris. He can call up pictures of the glory and the dignity of the First Empire. He has lived under the First Restoration, the Hundred Days, the Restoration of 1815, the Legitimist rule of 1830, the Republic of 1848, the Second Empire of 1852, and the Third Republic—in all, eleven *régimes*.—*The Pall Mall Gazette*.

MR. DALY'S COMPANY IN PARIS.—The French critics certainly behaved very badly to Daly's American company. On their own showing, they banded themselves together to insult several estimable ladies and gentlemen, better artists than nine-tenths of the clumsy gesticulators on the Parisian stage—first, because they don't like the English and American custom of wearing evening dress at the playhouse; secondly, because Mr. Daly was supposed to have insulted them by not flattering their petty vanity. Mr. Daly is a veteran dramatic critic and has had some experience of the craft in New York and London. He did not suppose that French journalists required to be fed with a spoon. An English or American editor would be very much surprised if any one on his staff were not sufficiently educated to be able to review a French play or to understand the French language; but in Paris all these learned men are as deplorably ignorant of English as the wiseacres at French ports who arrest yacht-owners for German spies. To vent their spite on Miss Ada Rehan for physical reasons was an ungallant act, but to select Otis Skinner as the best actor in the troupe, when James Lewis and Mr. Gilbert were present, is an instance of their silly spite or deplorable ignorance.—*Mr. Labouchere, in the New York World*.

SOMETHING TO MAKE EDITORS SMILE.—There will be a broad and, I fear, a genial smile upon the universal Editorial Face—I mean the Consolidated Countenance of the whole pack and parcel of human editors, as I confide to them this fear, this suspicion, this first failure of confidence in the perfect unanimity of aim between editor and contributor. The editor of experience will laugh. *Hinc illa lacrima!* For there is no smile upon the face of the editor of inexperience. There is to her a fearful shattering of her dear ideal, a fearful scattering of her fondest hopes, in this intimation of something short of a lack of absolute oneness between herself and her contributors. She weeps, she veils her face; she hopes she dreams; she grasps at the thin air into which the Ideal referred to seems to be about to locate; she prostrates herself upon the sands of that vast deep wherein the above-mentioned hopes seem about to alight. It is all in vain. The contributor declines to accept our motto when applied by us to his contribution. The contributor sends us all things. We prove them. Our proving prevents us, in many cases, from holding fast to them. The law of the survival of the fittest takes on its calm, undeviating course. But its consequences are fatal. At present I can say no more.—*Miss Cleveland, in Literary Life*.

Notes

SINCE Dr. Popoff's communication 'Concerning Female Authors' (page 138) was put in type, we have learned that the Rev. George Willis Cooke, author of 'George Eliot,' 'Ralph Waldo Emerson' and 'Poets and Problems,' has been at work for the past year on a critical study of the work done by women in English literature. It will be a survey of the history of feminine education in England; of the social influence of individual women, clubs, etc., on the course of literary expression; and of the causes influencing literary production among women; and it will contain notices of all the leading women-of-letters. The results of Mr. Cooke's researches will appear first in the form of six lectures to be delivered in New England during the coming season. The opening lecture will contain a survey of the work done by women as authors in Greece, Rome, Italy in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, France in the Sixteenth Century and England during the Renaissance and age of Elisabeth.

—Charles Scribner's Sons will publish in October, by arrangement with the author, the first volume of H. Morse Stephens's 'History of the French Revolution,' which has been received with much favor in England. It will be in three volumes, and will contain material which, for one reason or another, has not been used by former writers upon this subject. Mr. Stephens has written a special preface for the American edition, which edition will also contain a map not given in the English publication.

—Benjamin F. Taylor, author of 'The Isle of the Long Ago,' 'A Winter Psalm,' 'The Vane on the Spire,' 'June,' 'An Old

Time Picture,' 'Going Home,' 'Rhymes of a River,' and other poems, has prepared a complete collection of his poetical works, the first issued, which will be published next month by S. C. Griggs & Co. It will contain poems never before published, and a portrait of Mr. Taylor from a painting by Healy.

—How He Saved St. Michael's' has been somewhat widely copied of late, in connection with the injury caused to the church by the Charleston earthquakes. Curiously enough, the name of the author is said to be unknown. As stated in THE CRITIC of April 17th, the poem was written by Mrs. Mary A. P. Stansbury, of Appleton, Wis., and first appeared in *The Aldine*, in 1873. It is founded upon fact.

—'Old Boniface,' a new novel by George H. Picard, author of 'A Mission Flower,' will be published early in October. — *The Brooklyn Magazine*, which will be two years old next month, will contain contributions from Edith M. Thomas, Henry Ward Beecher and Mrs. Beecher, William H. Rideing, Fanny Davenport, the actress (her first appearance on the literary stage), Dr. Talmage and Anna Katharine Green.

—Mr. Stockton's serial, to run in *The Century* for a year from next November, will be called 'The Hundredth Man.' Matthew Arnold contributes to the October number of the magazine a paper on 'Common Schools Abroad.'

—Houghton, Mifflin & Co. publish to-day: 'A Step Aside,' a novel, by Charlotte Dunning; 'Archæology,' being the second part of the sixth volume in The Gentleman's Magazine Library; 'Adirondack Stories,' by P. Deming, in the Riverside Pocket Series; a new and cheaper edition of the Agassiz's 'Journey in Brazil'; and a new edition of Dr. Wm. H. Furness's 'Story of the Resurrection Told Once More.'

—Col. George W. Williams, the author of the 'History of the Negro Race in America,' is arranging for the publication of his 'Military History of Negro Troops in the War of the Rebellion.' Col. Williams is still in precarious health.

—The first opera to be given next season by the American Opera Company will be 'Faust,' at Philadelphia, on Nov. 15th. The score has been obtained from the Grand Opera House, Paris. Mons. Bouhy, vocal director of the opera, has just returned from Europe, where he was successful in engaging several American-born artists, including three tenors, two or three sopranos and a contralto. He also engaged in Italy thirty-six new ballet-dancers.

—Mrs. Barr's new story, 'The Bow of Orange Ribbon,' which is dedicated to the Holland Society of New York, is to be published October 15th. The scene is laid in New York just after it came into the hands of the English, and is concerned with the love-affairs of a Dutch maiden and an officer in an English regiment.

—Mr. A. R. Black, literary editor of the Brooklyn *Daily Times* and a skillful amateur photographer, has written papers on amateur photography for *The Century*, *St. Nicholas* and the *Century Co.*'s new volume, 'The Boys' Book of Sports.' The magazine articles will probably not appear before midwinter.

—Mr. Lewis Morris, author of 'An Epic of Hades,' has written a tragedy of the Byzantine period, for representation on the stage. Messrs. Longmans will publish the 'Reminiscences and Opinions' of Sir Francis Hastings Doyle, author of the poem 'The Loss of the Birkenhead.' —Mr. J. A. Symonds's 'Ben Jonson' in the series of 'English Worthies' will be published immediately. Forthcoming volumes in the same series are 'Claverhouse,' by Mr. Mowbray Morris; 'Sir Thomas More,' by Mr. J. Cotter Morison; 'Wellington,' by Mr. R. L. Stevenson; and 'Lord Peterborough,' by Mr. Walter Besant.

—The cable brings the following notes from London: —Prof. Tyndall has greatly recovered from the brain paralysis which affected him early in the year. He has been mountaineering in Switzerland. Herbert Spencer after a long stay at Brighton has had to stop work, even letter-writing. A Life of Anne Gilchrist, about to be published by Unwin, contains correspondence and reminiscences of Whitman, D. G. Rossetti, Tennyson and other literary celebrities. Darwin's life, by his son, will be published this season by Murray. A biography of Mr. Delane, the old *Times* editor, is announced as soon to appear. Lord Rowton's Life of Beaconsfield will not be published till after Mr. Gladstone's death, owing, it is said, to certain references to the Liberal leader. Cassell will publish a volume by James Burnley on the romance of invention. The title of the chastened edition of the 'Arabian Nights' is 'Lady Burton's edition of her husband's Arabian Nights, translated literally from the Arabic and prepared for household reading by Justin Huntly McCarthy.'

The price is three guineas. Copies can be obtained only from Lady Burton, 23 Dorset Street, London.

—As it was Written' and a portion of 'Pepys' Diary' have been added to the Cassells' Rainbow Series, and Hakluyt's 'Voyages in Search of the Northwest Passage,' with an introduction by Henry Morley, to their National Library.

—J. B. Lippincott Co. will soon publish 'Lyrical Poems,' by Emily Thornton Charles, author of 'Hawthorne Blossoms,' which appeared some years since; also 'Red Beauty,' by W. O. Stoddard—a tale of pioneer life in the West.—In the October *Lippincott's*, Joe J. Ellick will relate his experiences as a baseball umpire. Both in Washington and in Philadelphia Mr. Ellick barely escaped with his life from the hands of an infuriated mob.

—Dodd, Mead & Co. announce 'He Fell in Love with His Wife' and 'Nature's Serial Story,' both by Edward P. Roe; D. G. Rossetti's 'The Blessed Damozel,' illustrated by Kenyon Cox; 'Ten Etchings,' by European masters; a new edition of 'A Score of Etchings,' by celebrated English Etchers, with text by Roger Riordan; 'Blue' Jackets of '61,' by Willis J. Abbot, a grandson of J. S. C. Abbot; 'Two Thousand Years Ago; or, The Adventures of a Roman Boy,' by Prof. Alfred J. Church; 'Practical American Cookery and Household Management,' by Juliet Corson, fully illustrated; 'The Children of the Week,' by William T. Peters, with pictures by Clinton Peters; 'The Thorn in the Nest,' a novel, by Martha Finley, author of the *Elsie* Books; 'Elsie's Kith and Kin,' in the *Elsie* Series; 'Mildred's Boys and Girls,' in the *Mildred* Series.

—The following additions will be made to Dodd, Mead & Co.'s series of novels:—'The Canon's Ward,' by James Payn; 'To the Bitter End,' by Miss Braddon; 'Robin,' by Mrs. Parr; 'The Executor,' by Mrs. Alexander; 'John Holdsworth,' by Clark Russell; 'A Golden Shaft,' by Gibbon; 'A Sea Queen,' by Clark Russell; 'Mr. Scarborough's Family,' by Anthony Trollope; 'Dorothy Foster,' by Besant; 'The Ladies Lindores,' by Mrs. Oliphant; 'No New Thing,' by Norris; 'Two on a Tower,' by Hardy; and 'Samuel Brohl & Co.,' by Cherbuliez.

—Three volumes of Mrs. Ewing's stories are announced by Roberts Brothers: 'A Flatiron for a Farthing,' 'Lob-Lie-by-the-Fire, the Brownies, and Other Tales,' and 'Melchior's Dream, Brothers of Pity, and Other Tales.' Roberts Brothers' edition of Mrs. Ewing's works will be complete in nine volumes.

—George Routledge & Sons will begin this month an illustrated edition of Hugo's 'Les Misérables' in five large octavo volumes. The translation is that of Sir Lascelles Wrixall, but the expurgated chapters have been restored. Four hundred engravings will be interspersed with the text. The De Vinne Press will manufacture the book.

—Mr. Escott, who has been very ill, is to be succeeded as editor of *The Fortnightly Review* by Mr. Harris, editor of *The Evening News*, a Tory organ.

—Last Tuesday's *Times*:—The first annual meeting of the National Philatelic Society was held yesterday at the Metropolitan Assembly Rooms, No. 62 East Fourth Street. The society numbers about 400 members, the greater portion of whom were represented by proxy. John K. Tiffany, of St. Louis, was elected President; R. R. Bogert, of New York, Vice-President; S. B. Bradt, Secretary; L. W. Durbin, of Philadelphia, Treasurer, and Dr. W. H. Mitchell, of Bergen Point, N. J., Exchange Superintendent. There are philatelists in the United States who have invested as high as \$10,000 and \$15,000 in their collections. The few Americans who were interested in this subject some 15 years ago have many stamps that cannot be duplicated, and on which fabulous prices are set. A large number of these collectors have joined the national society, as have also the large dealers all over the country.

—Ticknor & Co.'s announcements include holiday editions of Byron's 'Childe Harold,' Scott's 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' and Mrs. Browning's 'Sonnets from the Portuguese,' the latter illustrated by L. S. Ipsen; 'Persia and the Persians,' by S. G. W. Benjamin, with many illustrations; 'The Virginia Campaign of General Pope in 1862,' being papers read before the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts; E. P. Whipple's posthumous volume of essays; 'Self-Consciousness of Noted Persons,' by Senator Morrill, of Vermont; 'Genius in Sunshine and in Shadow,' by M. M. Ballou; 'Confessions and Criticisms,' by Julian Hawthorne; 'Stories of Art and Artists,' by Clara Erskine Clement; 'Mural Painting,' by Frederic Crowninshield; 'Safe Building,' by Louis De Coppet Berg; 'Stories and Sketches,' by John Boyle O'Reilly; 'The Minister's Charge,' by W. D. Howells; 'Rankell's Remains,' a novel, by Barrett

Wendell; 'The House at High Bridge,' by Edgar Fawcett; 'A Romantic Young Lady,' by Robert Grant; 'Steadfast,' by Rose Terry Cooke; 'A Muramasa Blade,' by Louis Wertheimer; 'Agnes Surriage,' by Edwin L. Bynner; 'Songs and Satires,' by James Jeffrey Roche; a new volume of poems by Dora Perry; a new edition of Lucretia Hale's 'Peterkin Papers'; 'Shakespeare's England,' by William Winter; and four new volumes in the Olden Time Series.

—To a new number of 'Proserpina' (Studies of Wayside Flowers) Mr. Ruskin appends this note, dated Brantwood, 10th August, 1886: 'Life is really too disgustingly short,' he says; 'one has only got one's materials together by the time one can no more use them. But let me say, once for all, in closing this fragment of work old and new, that I beg my friends very earnestly never to mind paragraphs about me in the public papers. My illnesses, so-called, are only brought on by vexation or worry (for which said friends are often themselves in no small degree answerable), and leave me, after a few weeks of wandering thoughts, much the same as I was before, only a little sadder and wiser!—probably, if I am spared till I am seventy, I shall be as sad and wise as I ever wish to be, and will try to keep so, to the end.'

—J. B. B. writes from Xenia, Ill.:—'The Commercial-Advertiser's severe overhauling of Haweis reminds me of a crow I have long been wanting to pick with the pastor. I should like to ask him, through the columns of THE CRITIC, what authority he has for stating, as he did in his account of "A Visit to Walt Whitman," republished in THE CRITIC of February 27th, that the "good gray poet" was an eye-witness of the assassination of Lincoln. On page 26 of "Specimen Days and Collect," Mr. Whitman places himself in Brooklyn at the time of that event, and appends a remarkable description of the effect of the news upon himself and his mother.'

—Detroit Tribune:—'Neither in European nor in American fiction,' says a Canadian writer in the New York CRITIC, 'is Canada yet recognized; and to be unrecognized in fiction is to be unknown.' It is indeed a curious fact that in this age the life of a people—even the life that is past—is made known more by the pictures of fiction than by sober matter-of-fact descriptive or historical writing, and it is another curious fact that with the most romantic and picturesque history of any country on the western hemisphere, Canadian life has never yet furnished the plot for any considerable work of fiction. The novelist thirsting for a virgin soil should go and dig in Canada for the subject and illustrations of a story.

Publications Received.

[Receipt of new publications is acknowledged in this column. Further notice of any work will depend upon its interest and importance. Where no address is given, the publication is issued in New York.]

Bercy, Paul. La Langue Française. \$1.25. William R. Jenkins.
Brooks, Henry M. Strange and Curious Punishments. 50c. Olden Time Series.
Boston: Ticknor & Co.
Checkmated. Cassell's Select Library. 15c. Cassell & Co.
Cist, L. J. Catalogue of Autographs Belonging to. Bangs & Co.
Cleveland, H. W. S. Voyages of a Merchant Navigator. \$1.25. Harper & Brothers.
De Bornier, Henri. La Fille de Roland. 25c. William R. Jenkins.
Duffield, S. W. English Hymns: Their Authors and History. Funk & Wagnalls.
Dyer, Herman. Records of an Active Life. \$2. Thomas Whitaker.
Gallway, Sir R. P., and Lord Walsingham. Shooting. 2 vols. Badminton Library.
Boston: Little, Brown & Co.
Gogol, Nikolai Vasilievitch. St. John's Eve. \$1.25. T. Y. Crowell & Co.
Grant, Robert. A Romantic Young Lady. \$1.50. Boston: Ticknor & Co.
Grimm, Herman. The Destruction of Rome. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co.
Haskins, D. G. Ralph Waldo Emerson. 25c. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co.
Jewett, Sarah Orne. A White Heron. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The Labor Movement in America.

By Prof. Richard F. Ely. 12mo, \$1.50.

This book is the result of several years' work on the part of Prof. Ely, who is an acknowledged authority, both in Europe and America, on Economic and Social topics. It is the most complete historical sketch yet published of the origin and growth both of socialism and of labor organizations. No pains have been spared to secure accuracy. Prof. Ely has collected for years books, pamphlets, labor newspapers, constitutions of trades-unions, and like material, with this in view; and, during the preparation of this book, he has travelled several thousand miles, visiting communistic settlements and leading industrial centres, and forming the acquaintances of labor leaders. His picture of the present condi-

tion of the labor movement may be relied upon as taken from life.

Stories from Life.

By Sarah K. Bolton, author of "Poor Boys who Became Famous," "Girls who Became Famous," etc. 12mo, \$1.25.

A collection of Mrs. Bolton's bright and entertaining short stories, which inculcate good moral lessons, and hit off many of the follies and shams of the present day.

In Perils Oft.

By W. H. Davenport Adams. 12mo, fully illustrated, \$1.50.

A book of daring adventures and heroic deeds by soldiers, sailors, travellers, and men of renown, in various parts of the world; being incidents in the lives of such men as Sir Sidney Smith, Earl of Dundonald, Arminius Vámbéry, Joseph Wolf, Lieutenant Schwatka, Sir Samuel Baker, W. G. Palgrave, Prof. Palmer, General Gordon, and others.

Johnson, Rossiter. Exile. 50c. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
Jones, F. O. Hand Book of American Music and Musicians. Canaseraga, N. Y.: F. O. Jones.

Ker, David. Into Unknown Seas. \$1. Harper & Brothers.
Kingsley, Charles. True Words for Brave Men. 75c. Thomas Whitaker.
Lee, Vernon. A Phantom Lover. 50c. Boston: Roberts Bros.
Lose, Vernon. Otilie; also, The Prince of the 100 Soups. Harper & Brothers.
Loring, Benson J. Mary and Martha Washington. Harper & Brothers.
Lusk, Sidney. As it Was Written. 25c. Cassell & Co.
McGroaty, J. S. The Poets and Poetry of Wyoming Valley.

Matthews, Brander. A Secret of the Sea. \$1. Charles Scribner's Sons.
N. L. M. Colonial Days. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society.
Payne, W. H. Contributions to Science of Education. \$1.50. Harper & Brothers.
Pepys, Samuel. Section of the Diary of (1660-1). 10c. Cassell & Co.
Rook, E. C., and T. T. Young Folk's Entertainments. 15c.

Rothacker, O. B. Some Phases. 50c. Washington: Hatchet Pub. Co.
Roux, Joseph. Meditations of a Parish Priest. \$1.25. T. Y. Crowell & Co.
Shoemaker, Mrs. J. W. Elocutionist's Annual, No. 14. 30c.

Sinclair, Thomas. Humanitatis-studien. London: Trübner & Co.
Stockton, Frank R. The Lady or the Tiger? etc. \$1.25. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Stockton, Frank R. The Christmas Wreck, etc. \$1.25. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Stubbs, William. Lectures on Mediaeval and Modern History. \$2.60. Macmillan & Co.

Thompson, Maurice. Boys' Book of Sports. \$2.50. The Century Co.
Truan, Henri. Les Grands Ecrivains Français. William R. Jenkins.
Tyler, W. S. The Iliad of Homer. Books XVI.-XXIV. \$1.50. Harper & Brothers.

Vero, M. Dal. Francis. 25c. Harper & Brothers.
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The Free Parliament

[Communications must be accompanied with the name and address of the correspondent, not necessarily for publication. Correspondents answering or referring to any question are requested to give the number of the question for convenience of reference.]

QUESTIONS.

No. 1189.—At the close of the story, 'Jean-ah Poquelin,' by Mr. Cable, the mute and the leper go to the 'Leper's Land.' Is there a contagious form of leprosy in the South?
BALDWINVILLE, N. Y. E. B.

[We believe doctors disagree with regard to the contagiousness of leprosy. The disease was always treated in Louisiana, as in Oriental countries, as though it were extremely contagious; and it is so treated to-day.]

No. 1190.—Longfellow's much parodied 'Song of Hiawatha' appears to have been once imitated by a classmate of the poet, under the title 'Song of Milgen Water.' Where can a copy of the latter be found?
DRESDEN, GERMANY. W. C. S.

[We have never heard of 'Milgen Water'; but there was a parody on 'Hiawatha' with the title 'Milk-and-Wather.' We do not know by whom it was written, nor where it could now be found, but will venture to say that it is not worth looking up.]

ANSWERS.

No. 1184.—The author of 'The Rainbow' was Anne W. Maylin, a bright, attractive girl of English birth, who settled with her father, mother and two brothers in Woodbury, N. J. She was the friend of my early years, and I had great pleasure in her companionship. Our correspondence was frequent, and but for the Riots of 1863, I could produce much from her pen both in prose and poetry—and a full copy of 'The Rainbow' as well. There were many stanzas, all of equal interest. You will allow me to correct the fourth line of the first stanza, which I remember to have read as follows:

In the lap of the earth, in the beauty of May.

MARION, MASS.

A. H. G.

CHARLOTTE CUSEMAN thought Pozzoni's Medicated Powder the best she ever used. For sale by all druggists.

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